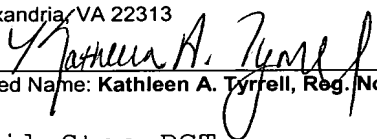


IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

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Dear Sir:

Preliminary Amendment

Please enter the following amendments and remarks into  
the record.

**Amendments to the specification** begin at page 2.

**Amendments to the claims** are reflected in the listing  
of claims which begins on page 3 of this paper.

**Remarks** begin on page 6.